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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of: Clifford C. THOMPSON

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Examiner: Robinson Boyce, Akiba K.

For: RESIDENTIAL AND BUSINESS LOGISTICS SYSTEM AND METHOD

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PENDING CLAIMS

November 7, 2002

1. A method for delivering a parcel by a carrier to a secure receptacle at a location, comprising the steps of:

(a) dispatching the carrier to the location in accordance with delivery instructions associated with the parcel;

(b) accessing the secure receptacle ;

(c) placing the parcel within the secure receptacle;

(d) securing the secure receptacle; and

(e) automatically registering the placement of the parcel within the secure receptacle after the securing step.

2. The method as in claim 1, including the additional steps of:  
reading a code on the parcel in response to the securing step; and  
storing the code in a memory.

3. The method as in claim 1, the registering step including the additional steps of:  
accessing a remote location by a communication link; and  
conveying the placement data to the remote location;  
wherein the registering step is in response to and contemporaneously with the  
securing step.
4. The method as in claim 1, wherein the secure receptacle has a locked state  
and an unlocked state, and wherein the accessing step includes the additional step  
of:  
moving from the locked state to the unlocked state in response to an  
authorized identifier.
5. The method as in claim 4, wherein the authorized identifier is received from at  
least one of: a magnetic strip card, a key pad, and a smart card.
6. The method as in claim 1, wherein the secure receptacle has a locked state  
and an unlocked state, and wherein the securing step includes the additional step of:  
moving from the unlocked state to the locked state after receiving the parcel.
7. The method as in claim 1, including the additional step of generating a log entry  
in response to the accessing step.
8. The method as in claim 1, including the additional step of generating a log entry  
in response to the securing step.
9. The method as in claim 1, including the additional step of generating a log entry  
in response to the registering step.

10. The method as in claim 1, where in the placing step is performed at night.

11. A method for shipping a parcel from a secure receptacle at a location, comprising the steps of:

(a) generating a pick-up request with shipping information including an identification of the location of the secure receptacle and an identification of a carrier;

(b) transmitting the pick-up request from the vicinity of the location to a remote location associated with the carrier;

(c) dispatching the carrier to the location of the secure receptacle in response to the pick-up request;

(b) accessing the secure receptacle;

(c) removing the parcel from the secure receptacle; and

(d) registering the removal of the parcel from the secure receptacle after the removing step wherein the registering step is in response to and contemporaneous with the removing step.

12. A method for shipping a parcel from a secure receptacle at a location, comprising the steps of:

(a) labeling the parcel in preparation for shipping with shipping information including an identification of the location of the secure receptacle;

(b) placing the parcel in the secure receptacle; and

(c) in response to the placement of the parcel within the secure receptacle, automatically notifying a carrier of the shipping information.

13. The method as in claim 12, including the additional step of securing the secure receptacle after placing the parcel in the secure receptacle.
14. The method as in claim 12, wherein the labeling step includes the steps of:  
generating a code containing recipient information; and  
affixing the code on the parcel.
15. The method as in claim 12, wherein the notifying step includes the step of transmitting the placement data to the remote location by a communication link.
16. The method as in claim 12, wherein the notifying step includes the steps of:  
accessing a remote location by a communication link; and conveying placement data to the remote location.
17. The method as in claim 12, including the additional step of dispatching a courier to the location of the secure receptacle in response to the notifying step.
18. The method as in claim 12, including the additional step selected from the group of electronically measuring the parcel dimensions and electronically measuring the parcel weight.
19. The method as in claim 11, wherein the secure receptacle has a locked state and an unlocked state, wherein the accessing step includes the additional step of:  
moving from the locked state to the unlocked state in response to an authorized identifier.

20. The method as in claim 19, wherein the authorized identifier is received from an access device.
21. The method as in claim 19, wherein the authorized identifier is received from at least one of: a magnetic strip card, a key pad, and a smart card.
22. The method as in claim 11, wherein the parcel has a code, including the additional steps of:  
reading the code on the parcel during the removing step; and  
storing the code in a memory.
23. The method as in claim 11, wherein the registering step includes the steps of:  
accessing a remote location by a communication link;  
conveying the removal data to the remote location.
24. The method as in claim 11, including the additional step of generating a log entry in response to the accessing step.
25. The method as in claim 11, including the additional step of generating a log entry in response to the registering step.
26. The method as in claim 13, including the additional step of generating a log entry in response to the securing step.
27. The method as in claim 12, including the additional step of generating a log entry in response to the notifying step.

28. The method as in claim 11, wherein the removing step is performed at night.

29. (Twice Amended) A system for delivering and shipping a parcel, comprising:

a secure receptacle having an interior space for receiving the parcel, the secure receptacle being positioned in a wall of an edifice, the secure receptacle having a secured opening from the exterior side of the wall preventing access to the interior space and an unsecured opening from the interior side of the wall allowing access to the interior space of the receptacle by persons on the interior side of the wall of the edifice;

a locking mechanism for securing the secure receptacle from the exterior side of the wall;

a scanner positioned within the secure receptacle to scan information on the parcel; and

a communication device connected to the output of the scanner.

30. The system as in claim 29, wherein the secure receptacle further comprises:

a platform for holding the parcel;

a door for selectively providing access to the platform; and

a lock for securing the door when the door is closed.

31. The system as in claim 30, wherein the lock secures the door in response to the door closing.

32. The system as in claim 30, further comprising an access device wherein the lock is released in response to a signal from the access device.

33. The system as in claim 32, wherein the access device is configured to receive at least one of: a magnetic strip card, a code from a key pad, and a smart card and issues the signal in response to the magnetic strip card reader, the code from the key pad, and the smart card.
34. The system as in claim 29, wherein the communication device transmits the information received from the scanner to a remote location in response to the lock securing the door.
35. The system as in claim 29, further comprising a button connected to the communication device for initiating a communication to a remote location.
36. The system as in claim 29, further comprising a scale for registering the weight of the parcel.
37. The system as in claim 29, further comprising a ruler for registering the dimension of the parcel.
38. The system as in claim 29, wherein the secure receptacle has a waterproof shell.
39. The systems as in claim 29, wherein the communication device is connected to the locking mechanism.